



POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 15 September 2020
Held remotely via Zoom

Present: **Tim Farr (TF) chair**
Peter Bateson (PB), Robert Caudwell (RC), Nigel Everard (NE), Matthew Harrison (MH), Lorna McShane (LM), Ian Moodie (IM), Bill Symons (BS), Innes Thomson (IT).

In attendance: Sue Crowther (SC) (ADA), Bethany Garry (BG) (Defra), James Yarham (JY) (Environment Agency).

Apologies: Andrew McGill (AM), Rachel Hill (RH), Beverley Agass (BA), Brian Stewart (BS), Angela Cowen (AC), Carol Tidmarsh

Ref	Minute	Action
1525	Welcome & Apologies IM welcomed everyone, and noted apologies received. Reminded members that AM, BS, and LM would be approaching end of term 31 March 2021. Committee places would be advertised to members, existing members were encouraged to reapply.	
1526	Declarations of interest None noted.	
1527	Approval of Minutes Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2020 were agreed as a true and fair record by the committee present, as proposed by LM.	
1528	Matters Arising Committee reviewed the list of actions, noting: 1518 – Legal advice regarding voting rights had been deferred to coincide with proposed changes to ADA Memorandum & Articles of Association to be put to the ADA AGM 2021. 1516 – Defra IDB Policy Advisory Group representative. IM proposed BA, in her absence, as a representative of IDBs from the Committee. 1514 – Educational ambassadors delayed till early next year but keen to welcome volunteers. 1512 – Action to seek guidance related to Precepts had been completed thanks to Phil Winrow. 1483 – Committee noted concern over increased risk of scamming and closed action, warning around fraud to be included in future Gazette articles.	

1529	<p>ADA Finance & Governance</p> <p>a. ADA Financial Position</p> <p>IT presented ADA’s financial position as at 01 September 2020 to the Committee. IT highlighted that owing to COVID-19, ADA’s overheads, events, and expenses costs were all reduced from previous years and those forecast in the budget. Research & development work running more slowly due to current circumstances.</p> <p>On income, membership and Gazette advertising (thanks to Ryan Dixon) were holding in line with budget forecasts. However, income from Floodex in 2020 was reduced from that in 2019.</p> <p>Overall ADA’s finances in 2020 were in a good position and forecast the position staying largely similar for the remainder of the year with remote meetings and the ADA Conference and AGM both to be held as webinars.</p> <p>ADA’s bank balance was consequently slightly higher than expected.</p> <p>IT presented the debtors report, and noted that work was ongoing to follow up on older outstanding amounts, namely a number of local authorities’ membership fees.</p> <p>b. Budget 2021</p> <p>IT advised that ADA’s Board of Directors had approved, at their July 2020 meeting, a freeze in membership subscription fees for 2021. IT stated that he was drafting a balanced budget for 2021, and welcomed comments from the Committee prior to October ADA Board meeting. IT noted that the income estimated from Floodex in 2021 may need to be reviewed.</p> <p>RC asked about ADA’s financial liability/risk from Floodex 2021. IT was monitoring the situation and will report the risk to the ADA Board in October.</p> <p>IT advised that a typical income and cost profile was anticipated for an ADA Conference to be held at the ICE in London. Discussions were ongoing regarding ADA and IDBs’ contributions to WRE. No Floodex dinner is planned in 2021, but additional costs have been allocated to hold a Clerks meeting separate to the ADA Conference. The budget included reduced audit costs reflecting audit requirement changes approved at the ADA Conference 2019, a slight increase in office expenses, but reduced travelling expenses and meeting costs owing to more online meetings anticipated throughout 2021. A tax allowance has been made which is dependent on the profits earned from Floodex 2020.</p> <p>Consideration would be given to spending on worthwhile projects, remembering to keep required reserves and remembering uncertain times.</p> <p>Action: IM to circulate draft budget to Committee members as presented to the ADA Board.</p>	IM
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<p>1530</p>	<p>Environment Agency Update JY highlighted four topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National FCERM Strategy Action Plan. The Secretary of State had laid the Strategy before Parliament on 14 July 2020, with approval expected to conclude later in September 2020. Environment Agency were to discuss with key stakeholders and RMAs about actions that can be implemented to support the Strategy. RH hopes to have meeting with IM & SL to discuss Actions that ADA could support for IDBs. Two of the key relevant objectives and measures from the Strategy were: <i>“By 2030 risk management authorities will work with farmers and landowners to help them adapt their businesses and practices to be resilient to flooding and coastal change”</i>, and <i>“By 2025 the Environment Agency will work with farmers, land managers, water companies, internal drainage boards and other partners to develop a long-term plan for managing future flood risk in the Fens.”</i> 2. National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA2). Asset data from RMAs was currently being collected by project consultants, Jacobs. IM reported that RMAs on a NaFRA2 asset data webinar had expressed concerns over the short timescales for providing data (deadline 15 October). NaFRA2 team were writing an article for the Autumn 2020 ADA Gazette. 3. Winter Readiness. A meeting in November between IT, RC, John Curtin and NFU was set for 3 November. IT thought key was to have PSCAs in place and to separate normal and exceptional events. Preparedness’ & readiness in agreements between IDB’s, EA & PSCA. JY would welcome local dialog with ops managers and happy to say majority have agreements have been signed. 4. Precepts and Highland Water Contributions. Defra has requested that the Environment Agency undertake a review of IDB precepts. A survey of EA area teams was undertaken, which has provided feedback shared with Defra. Now looking at updating guidance. IM would welcome long view on planned spending in line with Local Choices approach used by some Areas/RFCCs. BS highlighted difference between different IDBs and regions and would welcome better report on spending. JY advised they are looking at consistency and hope it will bring better working for EA and IDBs. Guidance to involve ADA. PB stated that his Board held original information on the basis of the basis of these calculations and would be happy to share this information with JY. <p>MH advised of the £200 million Defra/EA fund for Innovative Flood Solutions in England to test and demonstrate projects delivered in collaboration. Application period was to open shortly, and successful projects were to be announced in spring 2021, with all projects to be completed by spring 2027. IM reported that all IDB clerks had been notified following a notice from RH, and an article will appear in the Autumn 2020 ADA Gazette.</p>	
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<p>1531</p>	<p>Defra update BG provided an update from Defra. Highlighted Policy Statement published in July, on which Defra will keep engaged with IDBs and ADA. The Environmental Bill was scheduled to return during this parliamentary session.</p> <p>Two working groups had been formed to reform land drainage consent fees and IDB ratings. Statutory Instrument to update land drainage consents in draft. Regarding ratings the next step was to seek information from the valuation office, hopefully update in November. IM stated that ADA would be interested in preparing clear guidance to IDBs around the new ratings process and potentially Defra/ADA to commission consultants.</p> <p>IT thanked BS for this work involved in Land Drainage Consents. Also thank Phil & Craig for work with ratings. IT asked whether Defra would be preparing a report based on the figures contained in this year's IDB1 form.</p> <p>Action: BG/CT to confirm whether Defra plan to prepare a written report on this year's IDB1 data.</p>	<p>BG/CT</p>
<p>1532</p>	<p>Committee Workstreams IM provided the Committee with a progress update regarding the three existing workstreams overseen by the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational Resources. Drafts by LEAF Education consultants had been reviewed by ADA and comments returned. Have chosen to focus on geography syllabus and intend to create regional case studies similar to case study about Somerset Levels and Moors already prepared. Still seeking volunteers to be ambassadors to promote schools engagement within ADA member authorities. A school is being lined up to test the resources created in 2021 and the ambassador training will take place after this. 2. Development Contributions. Chapter drafts are still being reviewed and edited by IM to make consistent with existing guidance document style. 3. Byelaws. Correspondence with Defra was continuing around changes to the model IDB byelaws. <p>Future Workstreams. Committee discussed developing a workstream related to climate change adaptation and carbon reduction had been suggested to be overseen by the Committee. IT informed theme for Conference 21 would reflect on climate change as co in sided with COP26.</p> <p>Action: IM to share a more detailed proposal with Committee members before Christmas to be discussed and approved at the Committee's first meeting in 2021.</p> <p>TF reported that the T&E Committee were also developing a workstream around silt management and was keen that members from both Committees were involved. RC agreed it had a P&F element and David Sisson had proven evidence</p>	<p>IM</p>

	<p>from the Steeping River Action Plan work. JY commented that de-silting was a complex issue and agreed that it was best to utilise a suite of measures, taking account of the financial and environmental circumstances of each case. BS advised that in Yorkshire that there was a concern around bankside vegetation control management, which was contributing to siltation. TF felt that further research would be useful, and IT highlighted the environmental improvement that had been shown in some desilted watercourses. TF would mention to the upcoming T&E Committee meeting.</p>	
<p>1533</p>	<p>Future ADA events</p> <p>IT reported that he had received results of a consultant’s survey of ADA members’ opinions regarding ADA events. The survey had confirmed loss of appetite in Floodex in its present format. IT proposed that Floodex 2021 would be the last one with ADA’s involvement, if approved by the Board.</p> <p>The survey showed strong support for a demonstration type event, and IT was exploring the possibility of holding such an event during early summer 2022, with Yorkshire & Humber being a possible location. The survey showed that the ADA Conference remained of importance to ADA members and associate members valued the networking opportunities it presented.</p> <p>In summary, four main points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ADA Conference remains essential. 2. Completing Floodex 2021 and not renewing contact. 3. Initial conversations being held to help with business proposal for 2022 event. 4. Clerks meeting worthy of running as a separate event setting aside half a day for discussions. <p>TF, PB and RC all voiced support for these four points. RC would welcome ADA investigating a means to continue presenting seminars on policy and technical subjects to members, as enabled by the seminar theatres at Floodex. RC highlighted that we are all learning from this year what is possible with virtual events/meetings. LM asked about interaction with ASA around SuDS and planning, which had been very useful and informative. IT agreed and would discuss this further with ASA’s chair Bronwyn Buntine.</p> <p>IT advised that the ADA Conference 2021 would be held on 10 November 2021, which had already been booked provisionally with One Great George Street, London. It was suggested that in the future the ADA Conference may be held separately from the AGM to enable a greater focus on speaker and discussion, and ADA business respectively. AGM 2021 would include succession of ADA’s President from Lord De Ramsey to Henry Cator.</p> <p>Action: IT to circulate consultant’s report about ADA events to Committee members.</p>	<p>IT</p>

1534	<p>Update from ADA Technical & Environment Committee</p> <p>IM advised good progress had been made with ADA work on health, safety and welfare with a small working group having met a couple of times. Regarding data and evidence work, IM and Sofi Lloyd had been discussing with the Environment Agency publishing the digital internal drainage district boundaries on data.gov.uk in September 2020. The revised Biodiversity Action Plan template was complete and a final draft had been approved with comments by Natural England. Work on IDBs reporting on a set of biodiversity metrics was set to be discussed by the T&E Committee to agree a way forwards and the best means of collecting this data.</p>	
1535	<p>Any other business</p> <p>None</p>	
1536	<p>Future Committee Meetings</p> <p>Meetings would be held remotely online as determined by prevailing COVID-19 conditions. The Committee approved the following dates for their meetings in 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 19 January 2021 • Tuesday 15 June 2021 • Wednesday 15 September 2021 	
	<p>Close of Meeting</p>	

UNAPPROVED MINUTES